



RECOVERY COMMUNITY

TARGETED OUTREACH

MOBILIZING THE RECOVERY COMMUNITY:

Using Your Experience to Spread the Word

Battling an alcohol or drug use disorder—which includes misuse, dependence, or addiction to alcohol and/or legal or illegal drugs—can be an ongoing and difficult journey, as you may know from your own experience or that of a loved one. Denial, stigma, or the cost of treatment can act as barriers to seeking effective treatment.¹

Sharing your experience of recovery from alcohol and drug use disorders can inspire others who have not yet begun recovery. Additionally, your words of encouragement can have an impact on the children and other family members of people with alcohol and drug use disorders. About 11 percent of children in the United States have at least one parent who is in need of treatment for alcohol- or drug-dependency. As many as one in four children—19 million children or 28.6 percent of children under the age of 18—lives in a home where problems with alcohol alone are a fact of daily life, but other adults can make a positive difference in these children's lives.^{2, 3}

Alcohol and drug use disorders also have a significant impact on spouses and others who are close to people with such disorders. Family problems that are frequently associated with families affected by alcoholism include increased family conflict; emotional or physical violence; and increased family stress including work problems, illness, marital strain, and financial problems.⁴ Clearly, the effects of helping one person achieve recovery from an alcohol or drug use disorder can improve a multitude of lives.

Following is some information you may want to use in your efforts to help those facing barriers to treatment understand that treatment is effective and recovery is possible.

Why Do People Need Treatment?

Most people try to stop their cycle of substance use on their own, but this approach does not always work. Long-term drug use causes changes in the brain that persist long after someone stops using drugs, making it difficult to quit. Additionally, because alcohol and drug use disorders are chronic conditions, occasional relapses are common.⁵

For these reasons, many people require more than just a short-term, one-time treatment program. Treatment becomes a long-term process that involves multiple steps, including many attempts to steer clear of harmful substances. But even brief treatment programs can make a difference.⁶

"Once I admitted that I was an addict I was able to begin the journey of recovery. I have renewed my relationship with each of my brothers and sisters and of course with my parents. I revel in exploring my relationship with God and I love giving my all—to myself, my son, at work and in the community. I am not unique. Addicts in their addiction are scary. Addicts in recovery are amazing."



Tracey W. Lee-Cohen
Chairperson of Recovering Advocates for Treatment (RAFT)

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How Can Treatment Help? ^{7, 8}

In addition to helping people stop using substances that can harm them, treatment can help people become more productive at work, at home, and in their communities. Effective treatment for alcohol and drug use disorders varies with the type of substance the person has misused, as well as the person's personal needs and characteristics. In most cases, the process starts with an assessment so that an individualized treatment plan can be developed.

Treatment is offered in different settings, including residential and day care programs, as well as outpatient settings. As a component of treatment, some people may require medical detoxification (detox), a process under the care of a physician that helps manage physical withdrawal symptoms that can occur when someone stops taking a drug or other substance.

Treatment also may include behavioral therapy (such as counseling, cognitive therapy, or psychotherapy), medications, or a combination of both. Behavioral therapies offer people strategies for coping with their cravings, teach them ways to avoid drugs and alcohol and prevent relapse, and help them deal with relapse if it occurs.

During and after the treatment program, a range of testing, transitional, and after care (follow-up) services—such as mutual support groups—frequently are offered to assist with health care, employment, family concerns, and other issues critical to reaching and sustaining recovery.

What Kinds of Programs Are Available?

The process of recovery is personal. Achieving recovery involves many pathways: physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. To be most effective, a person's treatment plan should be based on his or her individual needs.⁹

Some people find that faith- and community-based organizations offer them the personalized treatment they need. Places of worship, such as churches, synagogues, mosques or others, can foster people's faith in the possibility that they can change. Places of worship can use their existing community networks to promote the message of recovery.¹⁰

To help people gain access to the type of treatment programs that are right for them, President Bush has launched the **Access to Recovery** initiative and grant program, which gives people the power to choose treatment programs that reflect their values and needs. **Access to Recovery** provides vouchers to pay for a range of effective, community-based substance abuse clinical treatment and recovery support services. The initial \$100 million installment of funding for the program is in the 2004 budget for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

More information about **Access to Recovery** is available from SAMHSA at www.samhsa.gov.



Making a Difference: What Can I Do?

1. **Share your story.** If you are recovering from an alcohol or drug use disorder, your success story may be the catalyst that encourages others to seek treatment. If you have a spouse, children or other loved ones who might be comfortable speaking about how your recovery has affected them, you may want to ask them to share their story as well.
2. **Consider your language.** It is important for all of us to carefully monitor what we say and how we say it, as sometimes we may use language that carries negative connotations, without realizing it. The key is to remain positive and serve as a catalyst for change.
3. **Foster education and discussion.** Keep leaders in your community up-to-date on alcohol and drug use disorders information. Resources for the latest information are listed at the back of this fact sheet. Additionally, encourage an open dialogue in your community about issues relating to treatment and recovery.

Making a Difference: How Can I Contribute to Recovery Month?

National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month (Recovery Month) is a nationwide celebration that highlights the benefits of treating alcohol and drug use disorders and promotes the message that recovery from alcohol and drug use disorders is possible. You can help make recovery a reality for others by taking specific actions during **Recovery Month** 2004, such as the activities suggested below:

1. **Take part in local events.** Volunteer to assist in organizing **Recovery Month** events this September. Offer to be a spokesperson who can put a face on recovery and testify to its positive impact. Use your ties to the recovery community to enlist the help of others to make the event as diverse and representative of the recovering population in your area as possible.

If you do not know of any activities or events taking place in your area during **Recovery Month**, check the official **Recovery Month** Web site at www.recoverymonth.gov. (Click on the 2004 icon and look under events.) You also can ask your local treatment program/services provider, county or State alcohol and other drug agency, or legislator. If no activities are scheduled, offer to help develop some. Community-based associations, foundations, local businesses, and faith-based organizations are some groups you can work with when organizing an event.

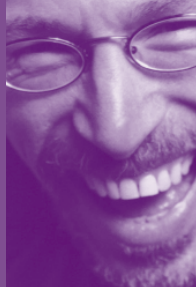


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2. **Submit an op-ed to your local newspaper.** During *Recovery Month*, you may wish to submit an opinion piece to your local paper that discusses treatment and recovery. For suggestions, review the op-ed template in this planning toolkit. Consider topics such as the need to improve access to recovery, the lack of adequate and affordable treatment programs/services, and the need for stigma reduction to encourage more people to seek treatment.
3. **Volunteer for media interviews.** You can help influence public opinion and decision-makers via local media interviews during *Recovery Month*. Contact local community radio and television stations to suggest one-on-one interviews in which you share your story to help others. You may be interviewed by the host of your local cable access news or community issues show. Weekend public affairs programs may be more oriented to social issues and open to talking with new guests.

For additional *Recovery Month* materials, visit our Web site at www.recoverymonth.gov or call 1-800-662-HELP.



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Recovery Community Resources

Federal

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (HHS),
Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration (SAMHSA)
Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT)**

*Information on treatment programs,
publications, funding opportunities,
and resources*

5600 Fishers Lane

Rockwall II

Rockville, MD 20857

301-443-5052

www.samhsa.gov/centers/csat2002

HHS, SAMHSA

**National Directory of Drug Abuse and
Alcoholism Treatment Programs
SAMHSA National Helpline**

*Confidential information on alcohol and
drug use disorder treatment and referral*
800-662-HELP (800-662-4357) (Toll-Free)
800-487-4889 (TDD) (Toll-Free)
877-767-8432 (Spanish) (Toll-Free)
www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov

Mutual Support Groups

Alcoholics Anonymous

*Support group that provides sponsorship
and a twelve step program for life
without alcohol*

475 Riverside Drive, 11th Floor

New York, NY 10115

212-870-3400

www.aa.org

Al-Anon/Alateen

Support for families and friends of alcoholics

Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.

1600 Corporate Landing Parkway

Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617

888-4AL-ANON/888-425-2666 (Toll-Free)

www.al-anon.alateen.org

Hope Networks/We Recover

*Supports community efforts regarding
treatment, job skills, living skills,
and retraining programs to reduce
poverty, crime, and illiteracy found
in untreated communities*

8867 Highland Road
Suite 320

Baton Rouge, LA 70808

888-472-0786 (Toll-Free)

www.hopenetworks.org

Narcotics Anonymous

*Organization for people recovering
from a drug use disorder*

P.O. Box 9999

Van Nuys, CA 91409

818-773-9999

www.na.org

National Association for Children of Alcoholics

*Public awareness and advocacy for children
of alcohol- and drug-dependent parents*

11426 Rockville Pike, Suite 100

Rockville, MD 20852

888-55-4COAS (888-554-2627) (Toll-Free)

www.nacoa.org

Therapeutic Communities of America

*Specialized substance use disorder
treatment services*

1601 Connecticut Avenue NW, Suite 803

Washington, D.C. 20009

202-296-3503

www.therapeuticcommunitiesofamerica.org

Tools to Help People in Recovery

Association of Persons Affected by Addiction

*A non-profit organization designed to
engage the consumer and recovery
community voice in reducing stigma
and enhancing services*

2438 Butler Street, Suite 120

Dallas, TX 75235

214-634-APAA

www.apaarc.org

Legal Action Center

*A non-profit law and policy organization
that fights discrimination against people
with histories of substance use disorder,
HIV/AIDS, or criminal records, and
advocates for sound public policies
in these areas*

236 Massachusetts Avenue NE, Suite 505

Washington, D.C. 20002

202-544-5478

www.lac.org

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National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc.

Education and information on drug and alcohol prevention, intervention, and treatment

20 Exchange Place, Suite 2902
New York, NY 10005-3201
800-NCA-CALL (Hope Line) (Toll-Free)
212-269-7797
www.ncadd.org

Vera Institute of Justice - La Bodega de la Familia

Family- and community-based recovery services for people on parole or probation
272 East Third Street, Avenue C
New York, NY 10009
212-982-2335
www.vera.org

Recovery Community Advocacy

Association of Recovery Schools

An association that brings together students and secondary and post-secondary schools, and helps professionals to support students in recovery from alcohol or other drug dependence
117 Lyle Lane
Nashville, TN 37210
615-248-8206
www.recoveryschools.org

Faces and Voices of Recovery

A national recovery advocacy campaign mobilizing people in recovery from alcohol and other drug addiction and their family members, friends, and allies
1010 Vermont Avenue NW, Suite 708
Washington, D.C. 20005
202-737-0690
www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org

Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health

A family-run organization focused on children and adolescents with mental health needs and their families.
1101 King Street, Suite 420
Alexandria, VA 22314
703-684-7710
www.ffcmh.org

Massachusetts Organization for Addiction Recovery

Education and awareness in New England about the benefits of recovery
c/o Boston ASAP
30 Winter Street, Third Floor
Boston, MA 02108
617-423-6627
www.neaar.org/moar

Sources

- 1 *Improving Substance Abuse Treatment: The National Treatment Plan Initiative, Changing the Conversation*. DHHS Publication No. (SMA) 00-3479. Rockville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2000, p. iii.
- 2 *You Can Help: A Guide for Caring Adults Working With Young People Experiencing Addiction in the Family*. DHHS Publication No. (SMA) 01-3544. Rockville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, 2002, brochure.
- 3 Grant, Bridget F., Estimates of US Children Exposed to Alcohol Abuse and Dependence in the Family, *American Journal of Public Health*, January 2000, Vol. 90, No. 1, p. 103.
- 4 El Guebal, N. & Offord, D.R., 1997. The offspring of alcoholics: a critical review, *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 134:4, pp. 357-365.
- 5 *Principles of Drug Addiction Treatment: A Research Based Guide*. NIH Publication No. 99-4180. Bethesda, MD: National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Drug Abuse, October 1999/Reprinted July 2000, p. 5.
- 6 Gentilello LM, et al. Alcohol interventions in a trauma center as a means of reducing the risk of injury recurrence. *Annals of Surgery*. 1999 Oct;230(4): discussion 480-3, pp. 473-80.
- 7 *Principles of Drug Addiction Treatment: A Research Based Guide*, p. 3.
- 8 *Drug and Alcohol Services Information System: The DASIS Report*. "Services Provided by Substance Abuse Treatment Facilities." Rockville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Office of Applied Studies, August 29, 2003, Table 1.
- 9 *Improving Substance Abuse Treatment: The National Treatment Plan Initiative, Changing the Conversation*, p. 11.
- 10 Meacham, J. The Gospel Truth. *The Washington Monthly*, December 1993, pp. 8-14.

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